Overview of Financial Assistance for Public Transportation in Virginia Administered by DRPT

This grant program information package contains information about financial assistance for public transportation that is administered by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. Information is provided for each of the various categories of grants that are awarded each year and specifically, who can apply for the grants and what expenses are eligible for each of the categories of financial assistance. The forms that must be completed in order to submit a grant application and instructions for submitting the form(s) are provided in separate document(s).

These documents are located at DRPT's On-Line Grants Administration web site known as "OLGA". The web address for OLGA is https://olga.drpt.virginia.gov. At this address, using this system, you can obtain all of the required documents, forms, and certifications for these state funded grants.

The state and federal financial assistance programs for public transportation administered by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) are:

State Aid Grant Program	Program Description	Eligible Recipients	Matching Ratios
Formula Assistance	Support costs borne by eligible recipients for operating related public transportation expenses.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations	Up to 95% of eligible expenses
Capital Assistance	Support costs borne by eligible recipients for public transportation capital projects.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations	Up to 95% of eligible expenses
TDM/Commuter Assistance	Support administration of existing or new local and regional Transportation Demand Management/Ridesharing programs.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations Planning District Commissions	Up to 80% of eligible expenses
Demonstration Project Assistance	Assist communities in preserving and revitalizing public or private public transportation service by implementing innovative projects for one year of operation.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations	Up to 95% of eligible expenses
Technical Assistance	Support planning or technical assistance to help improve or initiate public transportation related services.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations Planning District Commissions	Up to 50% of eligible expenses
Intern Program	Supports increased awareness of public transportation as a career choice for aspiring managers.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations Planning District Commissions	Up to 95% of eligible expenses
Transportation Efficiency Improvement Funds (TEIF)	State financial assistance is available for transportation demand management projects and programs that support the reduction of single occupant vehicle travel.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations Planning District Commissions Transportation Management Associations	Up to 80% of eligible expenses

Federal Aid Grant Program	Program Description	Eligible Recipients	Matching Ratios
FTA Section 5303	Support transit planning expenses	Metropolitan Planning Organizations	Up to 80% of eligible expenses
FTA Section 5310	Supports the purchase of vehicles and equipment	Private non-profit operators of services for the elderly and persons with disabilities.	Up to 80% of eligible expenses
FTA Section 5311	Supports operating and capital costs of transit operators in non-urbanized areas	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations Private Non-profit Agencies	Up to 50% of net operating expenses and up to 80% of eligible capital expenses
FTA Section 5313(b)	Supports local and statewide transit planning projects.	Local and State Governments Transportation District Commissions Public Service Corporations Planning District Commissions	Up to 80% of eligible expenses
FTA Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Program	Supports the operating and capital costs of special programs designed to connect unemployed people to jobs	Recipients of FTA Section 5311 and FTA Section 5307 Program funds	Up to 50% of eligible expenses
Federal Statewide Surface Transportation Program	Supports transit capital projects	Recipients of FTA Section 5311 and FTA Section 5307 Program funds	Up to 80% of eligible expenses
New Freedom Program	Supports capital and operating costs of new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).	Private non-profit organizations, State or local governmental authority; and operators of public transportation services	Up to 80% of eligible capital expenses. Up to 50% of eligible operating expenses

Public service corporations are chartered for public use and benefit. To qualify for this program, the corporation's Articles of Incorporation **must expressly state that the corporation is to conduct business as a public service company.** Further, the corporation must have a valid Certificate of Incorporation issued by the State Corporation Commission as a public service corporation pursuant to §13.1-50, Code of Virginia.

Prospective grant applicants who propose to engage in both public transportation services and human service agency client transportation services are advised of the following DRPT guidelines:

- Proposed New Public Transportation Services are considered reasonably successful in providing service to the general public if at least the general public consumes 20% of all trips. This percentage shall be applied system-wide and not on a route by route basis.

- General Public Riders are defined as those transit users who have no agency or client affiliation and for whom no other source of transportation assistance is currently available.

- Contract or Agency Riders are defined as transit users who are using the transportation system as a result of specific agency affiliation and for whom

there is some form of transportation assistance. Specific examples of contract riders are nutrition program clients, mental health and mental retardation clients, Medicaid recipients, sheltered workshops, etc.

- Ridership Mix is defined as the breakdown of a transit property's patronage by fare payment classification during the grant contract period. At a minimum, this breakdown will be between public and contract/agency riders.

Recipients of State Aid funds are encouraged to coordinate their transportation services with other public transportation operators, private-for-profit operators, and human service agencies located or operating within their service areas and they are encouraged to provide transportation services to human service agencies under purchase of service contracts. The contract service is not public transportation and State Aid funds shall not be used to support the direct operating costs of transportation services provided under purchase of service contracts between the recipient and human service agencies.

All current and prospective State Aid applicants must understand the principal requirement related to this issue. Fees that the grant recipient charges human service agencies for transportation services must be sufficient to recover all of the direct operating costs of such services. This requirement sets a minimum fee to be charged that can be exceeded.

Timeline for Public Transportation Financial Assistance Grants

The following is a timeline generally followed by DRPT for State Aid to Public Transportation grant application announcements, reviews and approvals.

Early November	DRPT announces that funding is available and invites submission of applications.
February 1	**Applications are due for All State Aid programs and FTA Section 5310 and 5311 programs.**
February to March	DRPT evaluates applications and requests any additional needed information from applicants.
Late April	**Applications are due for FTA Section 5303 funds**.
April	DRPT completes evaluation of applications and develops a Tentative Program of Projects.
June	Commonwealth Transportation Board meets and adopts Annual Program of Projects. DRPT notifies applicants of approved grants and funding levels.
July 1	**Fiscal Year begins – contracts executed and payments initiated**.

DRPT
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
The Smartest Distance Between Two Points